4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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585 184 are fired incessantly, and the strains of wild music echoing from the surrounding hills add to the animation of the scene.

The wedding ceremonies observed in Southern Albania, in so far as they differ from those of the Northern Albanians, resemble very closely the Greek country customs described in the preceding volume.[1]

764 171 The funeral observances of the Albanians also resemble in some degree those of the Greeks. Family ties are equally strong in both races, and the death of a relative is always a source of poignant grief to the survivors. The demonstrations of sorrow are loudest and most heartrending when a man or woman dies in the prime of life. When he is believed to be at the point of death, the women watching round him give utterance to frightfully piercing cries and shrieks, upon hearing which the friends hasten to the house of mourning in order to take part in the death chorus. When the last breath is drawn, all the near female relatives of the deceased who are not past middle age —wife, sisters, sisters-in-law, and daughters—testify their grief by beating their breasts, scratching their faces until the blood flows, and tearing out or cutting off their hair. In their utter abandonment of sorrow they also beat their heads against the walls of the room, calling wildly upon the deceased by his or her name, often exhausting themselves to such a degree as to lose for the time the use of their voices. With the weaker among them these frenzies of sorrow gene-

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[1] Chapter iii. An account of these ceremonies may be found in Von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*, and Dozon, *Contes Albanais*.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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rally terminate in a fainting fit, while others have frequently to be restrained by their friends from doing themselves grievous bodily harm in their excitement. 763

The men of the family receive visits of condolence from those of their own sex, standing in the courtyard. The formula in which sympathy is usually expressed is, "May you continue to enjoy good health," the speaker at the same time putting his right hand on the shoulder of the mourner. The latter responds, "May our friends be well," and the visitor enters the house to express in the same way his sympathy to the women of the family. The corpse is washed and laid out according to the usages of the faith, Christian or Moslem, professed during lifetime, and is dressed in its best clothes, which are, however, taken off before burial. And now begins the formal wailing round the body, in which the women of the family are assisted by their neighbours. 764

The majority of the dirges used are, like those of the Greeks, conventional, every woman having her memory well stored with a *répertoire*, from which she selects those suited to the occasion. They are sung antiphonically, a verse or couplet being first chanted as a solo, and then repeated by the rest in chorus. The nearest relatives first lead the chant, and continue without interruption until either their voices or their memories are exhausted. It is then the turn of the other women, who, when they consider that one has had the lead long enough, stop her with a sign, and another lifts up her voice. Among the dirges sung for a youth killed in battle the following, which is in the Tosk dialect, is one of the oldest and best known. 764 533 [462]

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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Remorseless, Death, I know thou art,
Yet, from a mother lone,
How couldst thou take her only son,
Her boy, her dearest one?

Why didst thou not, my treasured child,
My only darling son—
Why didst thou not resist his blow?
My boy, my dearest one!

Ah! knew'st thou not, within my heart,
Should'st thou from me be gone,
Thou ope'st a wound must ever bleed?
My boy, my dearest one!

[152] Sometimes, too, as among the Greek women, a mourner finds no adequate outlet for her grief in the conventional dirges, and, inspired by sorrow, bursts into an improvised lament for the lost son, brother, or husband, extolling his virtues and bewailing his fate.

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It is said that when an Albanian of the mountains is led to execution by the authorities for any crime but that of theft, which is by these people alone considered disgraceful, he walks to his doom with head erect and bearing dignified, improvising as he goes his own dirge, in which he relates the circumstances that have led to his premature departure from the world. His mother and sisters follow him to the place of execution, their hearts devoured with grief, but wearing smiles on their lips, in order that their relative may, on his side, show no sign of weakness. Intently they listen to his death-song, the words of

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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which they treasure in their memories, and hand down to their posterity.[1]

The funeral, in conformity with the usual Eastern custom, takes place within four-and-twenty hours after death. Before the corpse leaves the house, it is measured with a string, which is then thrown up into the rafters. If the deceased has not a silver ring on his finger, a coin is placed, as among the Greeks, on the mouth; and one of the relatives seats himself three times on that part of the floor on which he breathed his last. On the way to the burial ground, the men surround the bier, the women follow behind, and resume their wailings as the procession leaves the house. Arrived at the mosque, or church, the men enter, but the women remain without, weeping, shrieking, and lamenting continually. Before leaving the church, the men give the dead a last kiss, the women doing the same at the grave. The body is laid in the bare earth, and a stone slab is placed over it, on which the earth is cast. At this stage of the proceedings, the cries of the women become quite heartrending; they crowd round the grave, and can with difficulty be prevented from throwing themselves

[1] This calls to mind Burns' spirited song, "MacPherson's Lament," the words of which might fittingly be used by an Albanian *pallikar*:

"I've lived a life of sturt and strife;
I die by treacherie;
It burns my heart, I must depart,
And not avenged be.
Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he;
He played a spring, and danced it round,
Beneath the gallows tree."

PEAKS OF SHALA

776 "My father was a strong man and very wise; he married and had many children; he fought the Turks and the Austrians and the Serbs and the Italians. He had a good life. But he never went anywhere unless the ora went before him. In the morning when he left the house, if she was not there he returned and sat by the fire that day. Often on the trails he was with many people, but none but him ever saw the ora. She remained always the same, always the size of a twelve-year-old child, always very beautiful, shining white and with golden hair.

"When she turned aside on the trail, my father turned also, and the people did as he did, though he did not say why. My father was known as a very wise man. Many times he saved the lives of many people by following the ora."

Several of the older men in the intently listening circle shook their heads, as though they remembered this, and when I asked them with my eyes they said, *"Po! Po!"* which means, "Yes."

776 "When my father was sixty-five years old,
763 strong and healthy, one day the ora did not come. She did not come the next day, nor the next, nor the next, for many days. Then my father knew that she would not come again and that it was his time to die. So he arranged all his affairs and died. Just before he died he told us about the ora; he told us so that we would know why he was making ready for death, and it was because his ora had left him."

[At the material house of [64] Marke Gjoni--Andy st]

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
EF6 Serbs EF6
Albania EG

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race, but they also part with information for *sevap* (charity), out of gratitude for another service, or as a courtesy due to the sacred character of a guest. With many practising village seers and doctresses, it is impossible to learn anything, or at best a carefully edited version. All sorts of excuses are made; the priest has forbidden them to spread their superstitions, they have ceased from practice, or forgotten their art; they fear ill-luck, or most discouraging of all, 'You gentry don't believe in our peasant cures. They will do you no good.' Or: 'What can a poor old woman tell you? The doctors know better than we do.' Then, if the investigator really wants to get at the bottom of things, he must either apply for help as a patient himself, or, if his appearance might be against him, especially in the case of a man, he should send someone else whom he can trust. Spells are sometimes refused, too, because of the use of obscene words and gestures.

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Once an old operator was dying, and sent for me to see him. Not long before I had visited his house and questioned him. He held my hands while he told me about the plants which he used for salves; and when it came to telling of his manipulations he desired to show me, as well as he could for his extreme weakness, on my own limbs. Perhaps he had some idea that in this way he passed on his power, for when I feared that he might weary under the enormous effort which he was making, and someone standing by, misunderstanding, suggested that he bothered the visitor, he insisted upon doing it in his own way. I would gladly have had him leave all until he felt better, for the women of three generations of his family were already crouching on the floor and weeping, but apparently it was very much on his mind, and he half hoped that this very action might hasten recovery, or as one of his daughters whispered to me, set free his soul. (This particular was a little surprising, for these people were Albanian Moslems and I did not know that they held these views regarding death-bed confession.) The old man said: 'If I live, I will teach you all I know, and show you everything. But now I must do as much as I can in case I die.

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
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Albania EG-1

Swear that you will make only good use of what I tell you, that it be not a sin for me before God. Perhaps you will be able to tell me how to cure my disease and so more than repay me. Then I shall be able to tell you in a better way. But in any case I give you my secret now.'

A different case was my friend Ram Smail, another Albanian, and an unexpectedly patient collaborator. While I used to wander with him in the mountains near Peć, he picked the various herbs he knew, and explained their uses. He said one day: 'I am going to Asia. If you need me I will come back, or I will come to your country or I will send you herbs from Asia. I do this in friendship, because you are a stranger. I also shall be a stranger in Asia. I would not tell anyone from these parts. You go about unarmed, but what I tell you is a weapon.... I am leaving, besides, so it does not matter what you do afterwards.' In other words, I could inherit his practice, and, as he had more enemies than friends there owing to old feuds, he did not care if I killed off the whole population, once he was clear.

Many a man has learned the art of bone-setting or massage by watching others at work. The hospital servant and *feltscher* type of popular doctor are just as much respected as the self-taught or the inheritor of a tradition. A Serbian official document of 1836 mentions a certain Gavril Savić and his wife 'who, having suffered for a long time from wounds, have learned these remedies through treating themselves'. As a matter of fact anyone who knows a certain medicine or incantation can freely apply it, but on the principle that in this, as in all other things, some are 'lucky' and some are not, and a charm which may work with one may fail if recited by another. Hence the extreme care in guarding the monopoly of such secrets has a materialistic ground as well as a superstitious one. It is noteworthy that in many respects the same attitude is felt towards the priest. He owes his importance to his knowledge of prayers, to his reading and writing, and less to any belief in the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying-on of hands. In the absence of a